

Role Description

Legal Counsel and Governance Manager



Role Description Fields	Details
Department/Agency	Australian Museum
Division/Branch/Unit	Strategy, Governance and Development
Role number	51018728
Classification/Grade/Band	Clerk Grade 9/10
Senior executive work level standards	Work Contribution Stream: Professional/Specialist
OSCA Code	281299
PCAT Code	1228192
Date of Approval	25 September 2026
Agency Website	https://australian.museum/

Agency overview

Australian Museum (AM) is located on the homelands of the Gadigal people. The AM acknowledges and pays respect to the Gadigal people as the custodians of the land, sky and waterways, paying respect to Elders past and present. The Australian Museum (AM) operating within the NSW Department of Creative Industries, Tourism, Hospitality and Sport cluster, is the first museum in Australia and was founded in 1827. The AM provides access, engagement and scientific research to increase our understanding of natural history and culture, particularly of the Australasian region. The AM holds more than 22 million objects of biological, geological and cultural collections and develops programs, exhibitions and school and community education initiatives onsite, online and offsite.

The AM mission is: To ignite wonder, inspire debate and drive change.

The AM vision is: To be a leading voice for the richness of life, the Earth and culture in Australia and the Pacific. We commit to transform the conversation around climate change, the environment and wildlife conservation; be a strong advocate for First Nations' culture; and continue to develop world-leading science, collections, exhibitions and education programs.

For more information, visit the [website](https://australian.museum/).

The Australian Museum is committed to building a workforce that reflects the rich diversity of the communities we serve.

We actively encourage applications from First Nations, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; Pasifika peoples; people with disability, including physical, sensory, cognitive, intellectual, neurological, psychosocial, and chronic health conditions, whether visible or hidden; people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; people of all ages; members of the LGBTQIA+ community; and people from all socioeconomic backgrounds.

Primary purpose of the role

Support the General Counsel and Chief Audit Executive to provide legal, governance and audit services across the Australian Museum, including provision of legal advice, management of the AM policy framework, coordination of

the internal audit function, and provision of secretariat services to the Audit and Risk Committee, ensuring the Museum operates in accordance with legislative requirements while facilitating informed decision-making, effective governance oversight and the achievement of organisational objectives.

Key accountabilities

- **Provide legal advice and manage contracts** - Provide legal advice to AM staff, executive leadership team and Board of Trustees in accordance with legislation, policy, guidelines and industry practice standards. Work closely with the General Counsel in drafting, reviewing and advising on contracts, conducting legal research, attending client meetings and advising on legal issues impacting the AM.
- **Advise on procurement, commercial matters and legal compliance** - Advise on AM procurement including the legal and contracting aspects of procurements for goods and services, government panel arrangements, RFTs and tender responses, and engage in complex negotiations with suppliers. Advise on general commercial matters including review of research and grant funding agreements, image rights and other IP-related matters. Advise on legal practice and procedure to ensure the Museum operates according to legal requirements. Respond to legal-specific government-level enquiries.
- **Support the General Counsel in overseeing AM's compliance obligations in relation to privacy and *Government Information (Public Access) Act* (GIPA)**, including acting as the primary contact for privacy enquiries and GIPA applications, coordinating responses, complying with contract disclosure obligations, maintaining relevant registers, and providing practical advice to stakeholders on statutory compliance.
- **Undertake legal research and prepare written materials** - Undertake research projects and prepare written material and reports including briefing notes, discussion papers, minutes, correspondence, and documentation to assist the General Counsel and AM senior management. Ensure AM legal templates are up to date. Drive the improvement of legal, contract and procurement processes and actively engage with colleagues and the General Counsel to implement such improvements.
- **Manage stakeholder relationships** - Maintain relationships with stakeholders including representatives of government agencies, statutory offices, oversight bodies and other relevant groups in person and by preparing correspondence and other documentation.
- **Drive knowledge sharing and capability development** - Drive knowledge sharing, including identifying emerging areas of law and policy, and capability development within the legal team and AM generally to improve strategic and business planning, and aid decision-making.
- **Manage policy development and compliance frameworks** - Manage the development, review and maintenance of policies, including managing the policy register, advising on policy requirements to ensure compliance, and coordinating policy updates and approval processes through appropriate governance channels. Establish and maintain a fit for purpose legislative compliance register, including mitigation strategies and controls to manage compliance risks.
- **Support the Chief Audit Executive** - Support the Chief Audit Executive to manage the internal audit function by developing and coordinating the annual audit plan with designated auditors, facilitating audit scoping and execution, coordinating management responses to audit findings, and monitoring the implementation of audit recommendations. Support the Chief Audit Executive to prepare briefing papers for the Audit & Risk Committee, tracking and following up on action items, and ensuring effective governance oversight of audit and risk management activities.

Key challenges

- Managing competing priorities and providing consistently high levels of support, given heavy workloads, short deadlines, and the need to maintain confidentiality and act with discretion.
- Maintain up-to-date knowledge of the Museum's structure, function and objectives as well as a range of administrative systems, policies, procedures, protocols, guidelines and legislative requirements.
- Managing relationships and collaborating with colleagues and external stakeholders to meet the needs of the Museum.

Key relationships

Internal

Who	Why
Director, Strategy, Governance & Development	• Receive direction and guidance
General Counsel	• Escalate issues and propose solutions; receive direction and guidance; provide regular updates on key projects, issues and priorities.
Legal Officer	• Supervise Legal Officer on delegated tasks
Internal Clients	• Provide legal advice and guidance • Develop ongoing relationships • Facilitate compliance with policies, procedures and applicable legislation • Build legal capability and awareness
AM staff	• Manage the flow of information, seek clarification and provide advice and responses within the parameters of the role. • Develop and maintain effective working relationships and open channels of communication.

External

Who	Why
Stakeholders	• Liaise with a wide range of stakeholders including statutory bodies such as ICAC and the Ombudsman and external legal providers and the NSW Crown Solicitor. • Provide sound and reliable information; manage expectations, contribute to resolve and provide solutions to issues.
Government Agencies and Statutory Bodies	• Maintain collaborative relationships • Respond to enquiries and reporting requirements • Represent the Museum appropriately
External Legal Counsel and Auditors	• Coordinate outsourced audit services • Coordinate outsourced legal services • Manage service delivery and quality
Suppliers and Commercial Partners	• Complex negotiations • Resolve contractual complex issues

Role dimensions

Decision making

This role has autonomy and makes decisions under their direct control and refers to the team leader decisions that require significant change to outcomes or timeframes; are likely to escalate or require submission to a higher level of management. This role is accountable for the delivery of work assignments on time and to expectations in terms of quality, deliverables and outcomes. This role submits reports, business cases and other forms of written advice with minimal input from the manager.

Reporting line

The role reports directly to the General Counsel.

The role also reports directly to the Chief Audit Executive in respect of management of the internal audit function and support to the Audit and Risk Committee.

Direct reports

N/A. Provide day-to-day supervision to the Legal Officer.

Budget/Expenditure

Nil

Key knowledge and experience

- Knowledge of applicable legislation and NSW government policies
- Experience with government protocols and procedures and governance/procurement.
- Interpersonal and communication skills to interact with people in a variety of positions and effectively communicate complex information and provide accurate advice to people from various backgrounds, including Ministers, members, their staff and others.
- Skills and experience in providing legal advice, conducting legal research and analysis, and statutory interpretation.
- Demonstrated experience writing a variety of documents to a high standard including memoranda of legal advice, reports, briefing documents, and correspondence.

Essential requirements

- Legal qualifications and a current unrestricted NSW legal practising certificate.

Capabilities for the role

The [NSW public sector capability framework](#) describes the capabilities (knowledge, skills and abilities) needed to perform a role. There are four main groups of capabilities: personal attributes, relationships, results and business enablers, with a fifth people management group of capabilities for roles with managerial responsibilities. These groups, combined with capabilities drawn from occupation-specific capability sets where relevant, work together to provide an understanding of the capabilities needed for the role.

The capabilities are separated into **focus capabilities** and **complementary capabilities**.

Focus capabilities

Focus capabilities are the capabilities considered the most important for effective performance of the role. These capabilities will be assessed at recruitment.

The focus capabilities for this role are shown below with a brief explanation of what each capability covers and the indicators describing the types of behaviours expected at each level.

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
 Personal Attributes	Display Resilience and Courage Be open and honest, prepared to express your views, and willing to accept and commit to change	• Be flexible, show initiative and respond quickly when situations change • Give frank and honest feedback and advice • Acknowledge when someone challenges your ideas, seek to understand why and respond appropriately • Raise and work through challenging issues and seek alternatives • Respond professionally when under pressure and in challenging situations	Adept
 Personal Attributes	Act with Integrity Be ethical and professional, and uphold and promote the public sector values	• Represent your organisation in an honest, ethical and professional way and encourage others to do so • Act professionally and support a culture of integrity • Identify and explain ethical issues and set an example for others to follow • Promote a workplace culture that values high ethical standards and behaviour • Act to prevent and report misconduct and inappropriate behaviour • Put strategies in place to manage and monitor conflicts of interest • Ensure that others are aware of and understand the legislation and policy framework within which they operate'	Adept
 Relationships	Communicate Effectively Communicate clearly, pay attention to others and respond with understanding and respect	• Present with credibility, engage diverse audiences and test whether they understand you • Translate technical and complex information clearly and concisely for different audiences • Create opportunities for others to contribute to discussion and debate • Set an example by promoting information sharing across your organisation • Manage complex communications that involve understanding and responding to multiple and divergent viewpoints • Explore creative ways to share information and communicate with diverse audiences • Leverage insights from people with lived experience to shape communication and engagement strategies • Write clearly, concisely and persuasively in a range of styles and formats	Advanced
	Commit to Customer Service Provide customer-focused services in line with public	• Take responsibility for delivering high-quality customer-focused services	Adept

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
Relationships	sector and organisational objectives	- Design processes and policies based on the customers' experience and engage people with lived experience to inform service improvements - Create opportunities to learn about and measure what is important to customers by engaging with a wide range of customer experience - Use customer data, feedback and insights to improve service delivery - Find opportunities to collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to improve outcomes for customers - Maintain relationships with key customers in your area of expertise - Connect and collaborate with relevant customers from the community	
 Relationships	Work Collaboratively Collaborate with others and value their contribution	- Encourage a workplace culture that values collaboration - Communicate with other teams to improve information sharing - Share lessons learned with other teams and business units - Identify opportunities to collaborate with stakeholders, including people with lived experience, to develop better processes and solutions - Actively use digital information platforms, collaboration tools and other digital technologies to share information and work with diverse audiences to solve problems and improve services - Consider diverse cultural perspectives to provide insights into collaborative work	Adept
 Results	Deliver Results Achieve results by using resources efficiently and committing to quality outcomes	- Seek and apply specialist advice when needed - Complete work tasks within set budgets, timeframes and standards - Take the initiative to progress and deliver your own work and that of the team or business unit - Contribute to assigning responsibilities and resources to ensure the team or business unit achieves goals - Identify any barriers to achieving results and resolve these where possible - Proactively change or adjust plans when needed	Intermediate
	Plan and Prioritise Plan to achieve priority outcomes and respond flexibly to changing circumstances	Consider the future aims and goals of the team, business unit and your organisation when prioritising work	Adept

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Behavioural indicators	Level
Results		- Set, prioritise, consult on and develop team and business unit goals, strategies and plans - Anticipate, assess and respond appropriately to the impact of changes, including changes to government policy and economic conditions, on team or business unit goals - Ensure current work plans and activities support and are consistent with organisational change initiatives - Evaluate outcomes and adjust plans accordingly	
 Business Enablers	Project Management Understand and use effective ways to plan, coordinate and control projects	- Research and analyse data at a basic level to inform and support the achievement of project deliverables - Contribute to developing project documents and resource estimates - Contribute to reviews of progress, outcomes and future improvements - Identify when projects differ from their plans and tell your supervisor	Intermediate

Focus Occupation Specific Capability Set	Behavioural indicators	Level
 Legal	Legal Advice Provide quality independent legal advice and explanation of legal issues	Level 3 - Independently identify the client, scope, purpose and form of legal advice required in complex, urgent or sensitive matters. - Clarify and refine instructions where appropriate and assist others to do so. - Deal independently with vulnerable clients, including where capacity may be in issue or where ethical or cross-cultural issues arise. - Independently analyse and apply relevant law to complex facts, incorporating policy, probity and operational considerations, and creatively formulating options. - Independently identify and advise upon emerging legal risks and their strategic, commercial and policy implications. - Provide guidance to others on selection of external legal services providers and approves briefing of external legal services providers. - Conduct quality assurance of external legal advice provided and provide feedback to external legal providers.

Focus Occupation Specific Capability Set	Behavioural indicators	Level
	Provide professional supervision to other legal roles in preparing legal advice to assure the quality of the advice provided.	

Complementary capabilities

Complementary capabilities are also identified from the Capability Framework and relevant occupation-specific capability sets. They are important to identify performance required for the role and development opportunities.

Note: capabilities listed as 'not essential' for this role are not relevant for recruitment purposes, however, may be relevant for future career development.

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
 Personal Attributes	Manage Self	Be persistent, self-reflect and commit to learning	Adept
 Personal Attributes	Value Diversity and Inclusion	Be inclusive and respect diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives	Intermediate
 Relationships	Influence and Negotiate	Gain consensus and commitment from others, and resolve issues and conflicts	Adept
 Results	Think and Solve Problems	Think, analyse and consider the broader context to develop practical solutions	Intermediate
 Results	Demonstrate Accountability	Be proactive and responsible for your actions, and follow legislation, policy and guidelines	Intermediate

Capability group/sets	Capability name	Description	Level
 Business Enablers	Finance	Understand and apply financial processes to achieve value for money and minimise financial risk	Intermediate
 Business Enablers	Technology	Understand and use available technology to maximise efficiencies and effectiveness	Intermediate
 Business Enablers	Procurement and Contract Management	Understand and use procurement processes to ensure effective purchasing and contract performance	Adept

Complementary Occupation Specific Capability Set	Behavioural indicators	Level
 Legal	Statutory Interpretation	Interpret legislation, subordinate legislation and instruments in accordance with legislation and accepted legal principles
 Legal	Legal Research	Undertake legal research
 Legal	Legal drafting	Prepare legal documents to achieve client outcomes
 Legal	Advocacy	Act as an effective and ethical advocate